

Good luck, and God bless you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley, who, as a boy, was elected sheriff of Boys State, South Carolina; and Kevin Sladek, president, and Jeffrey Rogers, vice president, 1998 Boys Nation Session.

## Statement on House of Representatives Action on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation *July 24, 1998*

The Patients' Bill of Rights should not be designed for the political needs of any party; it should be designed to meet the health needs of all Americans. Unfortunately, the House Republicans passed legislation today that simply does not meet this test. This bill leaves out millions of Americans; it leaves out critical patient protections; and it adds in "poison pill" provisions which undermine the possibility of passing a strong bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

The Republican leadership's legislation does not apply to the individual insurance market and therefore excludes millions of Americans. It does not include many important protections such as ensuring direct access to specialists so that patients can see the cancer doctors or heart specialists that they need, or ensuring that care

will not abruptly change if a patient's provider is unexpectedly dropped or an employer changes health plans. Moreover, the enforcement mechanism in this legislation is insufficient as it gives little recourse to patients who are injured or who die because of a health plan's actions. Finally, this legislation is undermined by provisions that have nothing to do with patients' rights.

Americans want a Patients' Bill of Rights that gives them the protections they need in a rapidly changing health care system. The legislation passed by the House Republicans today falls far short of ensuring Americans the quality care they need and deserve. It is my strongest hope that the Senate will move quickly to have a fair and open debate that can produce a strong, enforceable, and bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights this year.

## Message to the Congress Reporting a Budget Rescission *July 24, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report one proposed rescission of budgetary resources, totaling \$5.2 million.

The proposed rescission affects programs of the Department of the Interior.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

July 24, 1998.

NOTE: The report detailing the proposed rescission was published in the *Federal Register* on August 3.